



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 13, 2019

ST. CHARLES COUNTY EXECUTIVE HAS CONCERNS ABOUT KRATOM BILL; ALLOWS PASSAGE WITHOUT HIS SIGNATURE

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO -- St. Charles County Executive Steve Ehlmann has allowed amended Substitute Bill 4721, which approves regulation of the sale of kratom and related products in the county, to pass without his signature. The County Council voted to pass the bill at the Aug. 26 Council meeting and it has been awaiting final approval from Ehlmann.

The County Executive informed the Council of his decision yesterday in a memo, stating that while the amended bill made important changes that address his objections to the original bill, he continues to have concerns about kratom use. Kratom is a plant that grows in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea which advocates say offers pain relief.

"My biggest concern," County Executive Ehlmann says, "is that the public may conclude that the County, since it has not banned kratom, has determined that it is safe to use. People need to understand that the bill simply prohibits its sale to those under 18 years of age and provides basic consumer protections for buyers, so they know what they are purchasing, the source of the product, health warnings and that the product lacks regulatory standards for manufacturing and dosing."

County Executive Ehlmann cites two press releases from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), regarding concern over risks associated with the use of Kratom and one with a warning that "the extremely high rates of contamination of kratom products with salmonella have resulted in numerous illnesses and recalls." One release also states that disturbingly high levels of heavy metals were found in kratom products. The news releases were published [April 3, 2019](#) and [Feb. 21, 2018](#), indicating the FDA's extensive research on the topic. The latest warning from the FDA about kratom is published on its [website](#).

Advertisements for new products or treatments often include the authorization "FDA approved," Ehlmann says in his Council memo. "We need to make it clear to everyone that kratom is not St. Charles County approved by passage of this bill. While amended Substitute Bill 4721 is helpful, I would have preferred going further – as have the five states that have banned kratom – or waiting for more research before taking a position."

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About St. Charles County:

Founded in 1812, St. Charles County is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri, and the state's third largest county in both population and economic share. It is home to 15 scenic county parks encompassing more than 3,643 acres with additional land under development and more in reserve for future development.

With a population of 395,504, St Charles County is home to large employers including General Motors, Citi, MasterCard Worldwide and Boeing. It is ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.

St. Charles County Government employs nearly 1,100 in more than 30 departments and offices, who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop. For more information, please visit sccmo.org